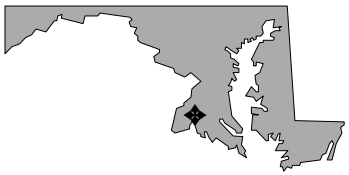
White Oak Naval Surface Warfare Center — BRAC 1995

Size: 710 acres
Mission: Research, develop, test, and evaluate ordnance technology
HRS Score: NA
IAG Status: None
Contaminants: Explosive compounds, waste oil, PCBs, heavy metals, VOCs, and SVOCs
Media Affected: Groundwater, surface water, sediment, and soil
Funding to Date: $14.4 million
Estimated Cost to Completion (Completion Year): $20.5 million (FY2011)
Final Remedy in Place or Response Complete Date for BRAC Sites: FY2002



Silver Spring, Maryland

Restoration Background

In July 1995, the BRAC Commission recommended closure of White Oak Naval Surface Warfare Center. Functions performed at White Oak were absorbed by Panama City Coastal Systems Station and Carderock's Indian Head and Dahlgren Divisions. The facility closed permanently in July 1997. The General Services Administration (GSA) and the Local Redevelopment Authority developed a land reuse plan.

Historical activities at the installation include landfill disposal of oils, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), solvents, paint residue, and miscellaneous chemicals (including mercury); disposal of chemical research wastewater in dry wells; burning of explosive ordnance; and composting of sludge. Records also indicate that a radium spill occurred. Contaminants of concern are volatile organic compounds (VOCs); PCBs; cadmium; chromium; lead; mercury; nickel; and ordnance compounds, such as RDX and TNT. These contaminants primarily affect groundwater and surface water.

Studies identified 14 sites, 7 of which required no further action (NFA) after the Preliminary Assessment (PA) in FY84. The remaining sites proceeded to the Site Inspection (SI) phase, which was completed in FY87. Contamination was detected at all seven sites included in the SI, and further investigation was recommended. PCBs in surface soil at the Apple Orchard Landfill site represent a risk to people who have access to the site; therefore, a fence was installed around the site.

The installation completed the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) phase for all seven remaining sites in FY93. The Human Health Risk Assessment identified a present risk at the Apple Orchard Landfill site and a potential risk at the remaining six sites. Source removal was recommended for five sites and encapsulation for two sites. The installation began Remedial Design (RD) for six sites in FY94.

A RCRA Facility Assessment, in FY89 identified 97 solid waste management units (SWMUs) and 19 areas of concern (AOCs), including 14 sites identified during the PA. Thirty-eight SWMUs required further investigation.

A technical review committee was formed in FY89 and converted to a Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) in FY96. The installation established an administrative record, an information repository, and a community relations plan in FY94. During FY96, the installation formed a BRAC cleanup team (BCT); completed RDs for Sites 8, 9, and 11; completed an Environmental Baseline Survey; and began developing a BRAC Cleanup Plan.

In FY97, the installation completed a finding of suitability to transfer (FOST) for a transfer of property to GSA and the Army; finished Interim Remedial Actions (IRAs) for Sites 8, 9, and 11; completed several underground storage tank removals; and initiated RI/FS for Sites 7 and 9. Relative Risk Site Evaluations have been completed at 29 sites. The BCT approved a Removal Action for Site 46, work plans at AOC 1, a basewide background study, and the SI for Site 46.

FY98 Restoration Progress

Forty-eight acres was transferred to the U.S. Army and 662 acres to the GSA. A land reuse plan was under development by GSA. A RCRA 7003 Order was issued. Of the 18 sites (AOC 1) scheduled for RI/FSs in FY98, 7 had RI/FSs initiated, 9 were recommended for NFA, and 2 were recommended for Removal Actions. No Remedial Actions (RAs) or RDs were conducted because the BCT rearranged site priorities. IRAs were initiated at Sites 1, 4, 28, and 46. A new Removal Action was initiated at Site 46, and Removal Actions were recommended for Sites 1 and 28 after site screenings. To expedite and improve cleanup at Site 46, the site was broken into two phases: surface water contamination and groundwater contamination. The installation completed an SI at Site 46, a basewide background study, and site screenings of Sites 1, 5, 6, 12, 13, 28, 29, 31, 32, and 33 (AOC 1) and AOC 100. The installation initiated a basewide explosives survey, Removal Actions at Sites 10 and 14, site screenings at AOC 2, and basewide storm and sanitary sewer investigations.

The RAB remained active, reviewing documents and providing comments. Site tours were given to community members on request. Partnering efforts were initiated with EPA and the State of Maryland. These partnering efforts have improved team performance.

Plan of Action

- Initiate RI at Site 46 in FY99
- Initiate Proposed Plan and Record of Decision at Sites 8, 10, and 14 in FY99
- Initiate clean closure at Site 3 in FY99
- Initiate RI for AOC 2 in FY99
- Complete Removal Actions at Sites 1, 4, 10, 14, and 28 in FY99
- Initiate RAs at two sites and RDs at four sites in FY00

Sites Achieving RIP or RC Per Fiscal Year